

Hi, my name is [REDACTED]. I am 52 years of age and was a chain smoker for thirty years. In January 2015 I was able to give up smoking using a personal vaporiser. Although I had a period of dual use (that is smoking and vaping) at the beginning I was eventually about to stop smoking altogether and have not had a cigarette for almost two and a half years.

I would like to comment on the Vaporized Nicotine Products Bill 2017. I am really pleased that very low strength nicotine eliquid would be no longer be illegal I have some concerns with this bill.

My primary concern is that it will do nothing to harmonise the state laws around vaping. The two states with the most extreme laws towards vaping are Western Australia and Queensland. In Western Australia you cannot sell the hardware but it is not illegal to purchase it from other states or countries. The practical upshot of this is that if someone wants to try vaping but cannot talk to a staff member face to face they may not get the best equipment for them. This can be very confusing for smokers wishing to make the switch and many may simply label it as too hard and continue to smoke.

Queensland has taken a very hard line on eliquid containing nicotine and has seized any eliquid that lands in Brisbane airport. They have then issued letters to the vaper telling them that if they discover it contains nicotine they will destroy it and may fine the vaper over nine thousand dollars. Clearly this is a ridiculous situation.

In all states of Australia that have made laws involving vaping it has been classified as tobacco. This has several foolish consequences.

1. Vaping shops are not allowed to display their products.
2. Employees cannot suggest a good product for someone to buy so if you are a smoker you can't walk in and get help choosing a good starter kit.
3. You cannot sample an eliquid. This is very important as finding an eliquid that you really like is an essential part of making a successful switch to vaping from smoking.

Unfortunately, this law will do nothing to resolve these issues in Australia.

My second concern is that 20mg or 2% nicotine may not be enough to help the really hardened smokers to quit smoking. Often older people or people who have damaged their lungs from smoking for a number of years cannot tolerate vaping at higher power levels which produce a greater volume of vaper which generally has a lower percentage of nicotine. Lower power devices which produce smaller amounts of vaper but the eliquid generally has a higher percentage of nicotine to compensate for this. In the UK it is estimated that about 6% of vapers were vaping above the mandated 20mg of nicotine, this is approximately 177 000 vapers. When I first made the switch to vaping I kept a mod with 24mg eliquid to help quell strong cravings and I believe I would not have been successful without it.

So whilst I appreciate the thought behind this bill, sadly I really can't support it. Thank you for your time [REDACTED]